तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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Blessings are Required

His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

When Lord Chaitanya finished His instructions to Sri Sanatan Goswami, Sanatan, being empowered and enlightened, was so transcendentally pleased that he at once fell at the feet of Lord Chaitanya and said: "I am born of a very low family and I have always associated with lowly people. Therefore I am the lowest of sinners. Yet you are so kind that you have taught me lessons which are not even understood by Lord Brahma, the greatest being in this universe. By Your grace I have appreciated the conclusions which you have taught me, but I am so low that I cannot even touch a drop of the ocean of your instructions. Thus if you want me, who am nothing but a lame man, to dance, then please give me your benediction by placing your feet on my head."

Thus Sanatan Goswami prayed for the Lord's confirmation that his teachings would actually evolve in his heart by his grace. Otherwise, Sanatan knew that there was no possibility of his being able to describe the Lord's teachings. The purport of this is that the *ācāryas*, spiritual masters, are authorized by higher authorities. Instruction alone cannot make one an expert. Unless one is blessed by the spiritual master, or the *ācārya*, such teachings cannot become fully manifest. Therefore one should seek the mercy of the spiritual master so that the instructions of the spiritual master can develop within oneself. After receiving the prayers of Sanatan Goswami, Lord Chaitanya placed his feet on the head of Sanatan and gave him his benedictions so that all his instructions would develop fully.

—*Teachings of Lord Chaitanya*, chapter 14.

The Path of Exclusive Surrender

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta
Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Question: Material experience is all we have. How can we give that up and surrender to something transcendental?

Srila Prabhupada: We should not be afraid of it, thinking it will be very difficult.

next column

One has to have great strength of mind to know the truth. If one wants to learn to swim he must not be afraid of water. At the same time one should know that *śaraṇāgati*, the path of exclusive surrender, is not a difficult thing. In fact, it is very easy and natural for the soul. Anything opposed to it is unnatural and painful.

Question: How can we have such courage?

Srila Prabhupada: We have to hear about the Supreme Lord from his own agent. When we hear those things, all material experience and the inclination to make false arguments have to be locked up. When we hear about the Supreme Lord from a living *sādhu* who can deliver these talks in a bold, lively, inspiring way, then all weakness will disappear from our hearts, we will feel a kind of courage which was never there before, and the soul's natural tendency to surrender to the Lord will fully manifest itself. In that surrendered heart, the eternally manifested truth of the transcendental world will spontaneously reveal itself.

Question: Are the path of exclusive surrender and firm determination very important things for us?

Srila Prabhupada: Absolutely. One should have such firm determination to worship the Lord — "I must receive his grace. I must not go astray. I must always go on chanting his name. God will undoubtedly help me if I am a bona fide seeker."

If one fully surrenders himself at the lotus feet of his guru then he will definitely attain all success. The mercy of Sri Gurudeva, who is non-different from Sri Rupa, will be our only capital. Only that will be beneficial for us.

— Excerpted from *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*. Mandala Publishing Group. Eugene, Oregon. 1997.

Unflinching Service to Guru

Bhagavad-gītā 2.41 with the commentary of Srila Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur

vyavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana
bahu-śākhā hy anantāś ca buddhayo 'vyavasāyinām

Those who are on this path are resolute in purpose and their aim is one. O beloved child of the Kurus, the intelligence of those who are irresolute is many-branched.

COMMENTARY: In the verse beginning with *"vyavasāya"*, Krishna describes that intelligence absorbed in devotional service is far superior to any other kind of intelligence. The word *"iha"* means *"bhakti-yoge"* — "in relation to devotional service". Intelligence fixed in devotional service is one-pointed.

A devotee thinks, "The processes of devotional service prescribed by my spiritual master — glorifying the Lord, remembering the Lord, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, etc. — these alone are the means (*sādhana*), these alone are the goal (*sādhya*), these alone are my life. I refuse to give them up either at the stage of practice or perfection. Those practices alone are my desired object. I have no other occupation than these. Nor is anything else desirable for me, even in dreams. It doesn't matter to me whether there is happiness or distress in this endeavor, nor whether the cycle of repeated birth and death is destroyed or not."

This kind of fixed intelligence is found only in *akaitava-bhakti* — devotional service devoid of the cheating propensity.

With the phrase *"bahu-śākhā"*, Krishna describes that intelligence directed elsewhere cannot be one-pointed. That is to say, in *karma-yoga* the intelligence is many-branched because the desires are endless. Similarly, in *jñāna-yoga* the intelligence is first engaged in *niṣkāma-karma*, working without desire, in order to purify the heart. Then when the heart is purified, the intelligence is engaged in *karma-sannyāsa*, giving up of all activities. At that point, the intelligence is engaged in *jñāna*. For *jñāna* to be fruitful, the intelligence must be engaged in *bhakti* in accordance with Krishna's statement (in *Bhāg.* 11.19.1): "One should surrender that knowledge unto me."

— Verse translation by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Commentary translated by Sri Matsya Avatar Das.

The Story of Hriday Chaitanya

Adapted from Srila Narahari Chakravarti's Sri Bhakti-ratnākara 7.389-448

hena paṇḍitera śiṣya hṛdaya-caitanya
paṇḍita ṭhākura vinā ye nā jāne anya

Hriday Chaitanya was a disciple of Gauridas Pandit. Hriday Chaitanya thought only of Gauridas Pandit Thakur. He thought of nothing else. (Text 389)

Hriday Chaitanya was previously known by the name Sri Hridayananda. He was always carefully engaged in serving the Lord. One morning, Gauridas came to the house of Gadadhar Pandit. Seeing him, Gadadhar Pandit respectfully offered him a seat. Smiling, Gadadhar said, "Having seen you this morning, this day will be auspicious for me."

Gauridas sweetly replied, "Because I have seen you, this day will be auspicious for me." Gauridas then said, "I want to request a gift from you."

Gadadhar said, "Everything here is your property. Please take whatever you wish. Don't hesitate."

Gauridas Pandit Thakur then said, "I want Hridayananda." Hearing these words, Gadadhar Pandit Goswami called for Hridayananda. Hridayananda came there with a joyful heart and fell to the ground offering obeisances to the two great devotees. Gadadhar then gave Hridayananda to Gauridas.

Gadadhar Pandit Goswami gave great mercy to Hridayananda. Who can describe the full extent of that mercy? From the time of Hridayananda's childhood, Gadadhar Pandit had protected the boy. He taught the scriptures to Hridayananda, which the boy learned in a few days. Although he loved Hridayananda like a son, Gadadhar Pandit didn't feel possessive. He happily gave Hridayananda to Gauridas Pandit.

Without the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has the power to understand the activities of Gadadhar Pandit and Gauridas? Tasting the nectar of talking about the Lord's pastimes, Gauridas stayed for some time at Gadadhar's side. Then, bidding him farewell, Gauridas returned home with Hridayananda.

After some days, Gauridas gave *mantra-dikṣā* to Hridayananda and then presented him at the feet of his deities of Lord Nityananda and Lord Chaitanya. [Gauridas' deities of Gaura and Nitai are famous. See Bindu number 132.] Hridayananda became absorbed in service to the two Lords. Seeing this, Gauridas was joyful at heart.

One day, Gauridas said to Hridayananda, "The celebration for the Lord's birth is coming soon. I'm going to the homes of some disciples to collect ingredients for the festival. Please stay here and nicely serve the deities." Gauridas then left with some dear friends, went to a secluded place, and became wild with bliss tasting the nectar of the Lord's pastimes.

Several days went by, and when Gauridas had neither returned nor sent any message, Hridayananda became concerned. He thought, "Why is my master so late in returning? Many ingredients have already been collected here for the celebration, and only two days remain before the festival." Thinking in this way, and remembering his spiritual master's feet, Hridayananda sent festival invitations everywhere.

Gauridas Pandit returned one day before the festival. Hearing of the invitations, he became joyful at heart. However, he externally acted angry and rebuked Hridayananda, "Even while I am still present you act independently. You sent out the invitations, so you should celebrate the festival. But I won't stay here for it."

Hearing these words, Hridayananda offered obeisances at his guru's feet, then went to the bank of the Ganga and sat under a tree.

Meanwhile, Gauridas began the festival at his home. Crowds of saintly devotees arrived from all over. A wealthy merchant sent by boat many provisions for the festival. Arriving on the bank of the Ganga, the merchant informed Hridayananda about the items he had brought. Hridayananda then sent a message to his spiritual master.

Hearing the news, Gauridas became externally angry and told the messenger, "Tell Hridayananda to accept the items and celebrate the festival himself."

Receiving this order from his guru, Hridayananda joyfully observed the festival. After hearing about Hridayananda's celebration, many *vaiṣṇavas* arrived there. Hridayananda began singing a wonderful *kīrtana*. The sounds of the *mṛdaṅga* drums and *karatālas* touched the sky and the great ocean of bliss overflowed. The *vaiṣṇavas* danced in a big circle while tears of ecstatic love flowed from every eye.

Then Hridayananda saw Nitai and Chaitanya, the two Lords of personified

ecstatic love, dancing in the midst of the *saṅkīrtana*. How graceful was their dancing! They made the whole world mad with bliss. Their glorious forms filled every direction with light. The two moons of their faces destroyed the pride of the moon in the sky. They showered a monsoon of bliss on Hridayananda's eyes.

Hearing tumultuous sounds of "Jaya! Jaya!" from the bliss of that *saṅkīrtana*, Gauridas at home became wild with bliss. Gauridas then told Gangadas Pandit, "It's time for worship. Please go to the temple room." Entering the altar and seeing that the deity throne was empty, Gangadas went and told Gauridas.

What wonderful ecstatic *prema* arose within Gauridas when he heard this news! He knew that by his pure love, Hridayananda had made the two Lords into his submissive servants. His heart filled with bliss, but, externally feigning anger, Gauridas picked up a stick and went to the *saṅkīrtana* on the banks of the Ganga. There he saw the two Lords dancing.

Seeing Gauridas Pandit's anger, the two brothers disappeared and returned to their temple. ☛

Then Gauridas saw Lord Chaitanya-chandra perform a wonderful pastime. He saw Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu enter into Hridayananda's heart. Gazing at Lord Gauranga in Hridayananda's heart, Gauridas could not check his tears. He gazed with unblinking eyes. He forgot his external anger. The stick fell from his hand, but he didn't notice it. In ecstatic love, he ran with extended arms, and with a joyful heart embraced Hridayananda.

He told Hridayananda, *tui dhanya dhanya*! — "You are fortunate, fortunate! From today onwards your name will be Hriday Chaitanya, 'he in whose heart Chaitanya has entered'." Tears poured from the eyes of Gauridas onto the body of Hriday Chaitanya. Rolling on the ground, Hriday Chaitanya fell at the feet of his *guru-mahāraja*.

Taking Hriday Chaitanya with him, Gauridas Pandit Thakur returned to the temple courtyard. Gazing at the sweetness of the deities of the two brothers Gaura and Nitai, Gauridas appointed Hriday Chaitanya in charge of their worship. The bliss of the *vaiṣṇavas* was like an ocean that had no shore. I have no power to describe this great festival. The news of Gauridas Pandit's mercy on Hridayananda spread throughout the world. In this way he attained the name Hriday Chaitanya. ❀

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KRISHNA'S PURPOSE IN COMING TO THIS WORLD

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam *10.14.37*

prapañcaṁ niṣprapañco 'pi viḍambayasi bhū-tale
prapanna-janatānanda-sandohaṁ prathituṁ prabho

[Brahma prays to Krishna:] My dear master, although you have nothing to do with material existence, you come to this earth and imitate material life just to expand the varieties of ecstatic enjoyment for your surrendered devotees. ❀

— *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. English translation and commentary by the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. Los Angeles. 1985.